

10 Different State Diploma Structures from Across the Country

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Guiding Questions

- * How do other states compare on issues of rigor, complexity of course requirements, and college and career readiness?
- * How do other states compare as it relates to flexibility?
- * What makes each state's diploma requirements unique?
- * What are the resulting implications for Indiana?
- * States reviewed include:
 - * Colorado, Florida, Kentucky, Maryland, Minnesota, Nevada, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia
- * **General Note: Credits for each state are based on yearly credits not semesters as in Indiana.**

Indiana Diploma Structure

- * Four diploma options:
 - * General Diploma,
 - * Core 40,
 - * Core 40 with Academic Honors,
 - * Core 40 with Technical Honors.

Indiana Diploma Content

- * Credit Requirements:

- * 40 or 47 credits required
- * The General and Core 40 with Technical Honors each require students to take 6 credits in a state-approved College and Career Pathway courses.
- * Technical Honors requires certificate or 6 transcribed college credits.
- * Both Honors diplomas require students to earn a “C” or better in courses counting toward the diploma and have a GPA of a “B” or better.
- * Academic Honors only option requiring 8 credits of math.
- * Academic Honors requires AP, transcribed college credits, or IB credit.

Indiana Diploma Content

Content	General Diploma	Core 40	Core 40 (Academic)	Core 40 (Technical)
English	8	8	8	8
Math	4*	6**	8**	6**
Science	4	6	6	6
Social Studies	4	6	6	6
Directed Electives (Language, Fine Arts, CTE)	11 (6 CTE)	5	8-10*** (6 – 8 foreign language)	11(6 CTE)
PE	2	2	2	2
Health	1	1	1	1
Electives	6	6	8	7
Total	40	40	47	47

*General diploma students are required to earn 2 credits in a Math or Quantitative Reasoning course their junior or senior year.

**Students must take a Math or Quantitative Reasoning course all 4 years of high school.

***Students must take 3 years of 1 foreign language or two years of two foreign languages.

Florida Diploma Structure

- * Two diploma options: Standard and ACCEL
- * Credit Requirements:
 - * Different depending upon option: 18 or 24 required
 - * Standard option has 2 designations: Scholar (requires AP and language requirement) and Merit (students must earn at least 1 industry certificate)
 - * ACCEL option: 2 designations (College and Career Prep) that allow students to graduate in 3 years.
 - * College Prep – 3.5 GPA, pass state tests and have SAT or ACT concordant scores and 2 language credits
 - * Career Prep – 3.0 GPA, pass state tests and have concordant scores on SAT or ACT, 1 of 3 options (3 credits in vocational or career ed program plus 2 elective credits, 3 credits in CTE dual enrollment course and 2 elective credits, 5 credits in vocational or career ed courses).
 - * ***In either diploma option, students may earn high school credit if they can pass a statewide assessment without enrolling in the course. This applies to the following courses: Algebra I, Geometry, U.S. History, Biology, and Algebra II.

Florida Diploma Content

Content	Standard	Scholar**	Merit***	ACCEL
English	4	4	4	4
Math	4	4	4	4
Science	3	3	3	3
Social Studies	3	3	3	3
Arts	1	1	1	1
PE	1	1	1	0
Electives	8	8 (2 in language)	8	3
Total	*24	*24	*24	18

*One course must be taken online

**Requires at least 1 AP, IB, or dual credit course

***Requires one or more industry certificates

Florida's Summary of Differences Compared to Indiana

- * Florida's Standard diploma requires significantly more credits (8 more when compared by semester) than Indiana's General and Core 40 options and more credit than all of Indiana's options.
- * Every diploma option/designation in Florida requires 4 years of math credit to be earned.
- * Including all elective options (directed and other electives) there are more elective choices for students in Indiana than in Florida (with the exception of the Core 40).
- * There is an accelerated option in which core curriculum is just as rigorous as the 4 year option.
- * Students can receive credit based upon competency for a number of core classes.
- * An online course is a requirement of the standard option.

Maryland Structure and Content

- * Maryland has one diploma option with two paths for “other” credit

Content	Credits
English	4
Math	3
Science	3
Social Studies	3
Fine Arts	1
PE	.5
Health	.5
Technology Education	1
Other	2 credits of foreign language or 2 credits of advanced technology ed and 3 credits in electives Or 4 credits by successfully completing a State-approved career & technology program and 1 elective

Maryland's Summary of Differences Compared to Indiana

- * Maryland's diploma option requires more credits (when compared by semester) than Indiana's General and Core 40 options.
- * A technology education class is required.
- * Students must earn 5 credits in a chosen a path.
- * Including all elective options (directed and other electives) there are more elective choices for students in Indiana than in Maryland (with the exception of the Core 40).

Minnesota Diploma Structure and Content

Minnesota has one diploma in which 21.5 credits must be earned.

Content	Credits
English	4
Mathematics	3 (must take Alg I 8 th grade)
Science	3
Social Studies	3.5
Art	1
Electives	7
Total	21.5

Minnesota's Summary of Differences Compared to Indiana

- * Minnesota's diploma option requires more credit (when compared by semester) than Indiana's General and Core 40 options.
- * Algebra I is required of 8th grade students.
- * Social studies requires one additional semester than in any of Indiana's options.
- * Including all elective options (directed and other electives) there are more elective choices for students in Indiana than in Minnesota (with the exception of the Core 40).

Tennessee Structure and Content

- * Two options: College Path and Career Path
- End of course assessments count for 25% of grade in: English I, II, III, Algebra I, II, Biology, Chemistry, and this year Social Studies

Content	College	Career
English	4	4
Mathematics	4	4
Science	3	3
Social Studies	3	3
PE and Wellness	1.5	1.5
Personal Finance	.5	.5
Art	1	*
Foreign Language	2	*
Electives	3**	3-6
Total	22	22

*May be waived for students not attending a University to expand elective focus.

**Must consist of Math, Science, CTE, Arts, Humanities, AP or IB.

Tennessee's Summary of Differences Compared to Indiana

- * More credits are required (when compared by semester) in Tennessee than Indiana's General or Core 40 options.
- * 4 years of math is required in each of Tennessee's options.
- * A personal finance class is required in Tennessee.
- * Including all elective options (directed and other electives) there are more elective choices for students in Indiana than in Tennessee.

West Virginia Diploma Structure

- * Two diploma options: Professional Pathway and Skilled Pathway.
- * Credit Requirements:
 - * Each option requires 24 credits.
 - * Additional requirements/recommendations: career development opportunities, experiential learning, integrated technology throughout core courses and one online learning experience, and a senior project.

West Virginia Diploma Content Required

Content	Professional Pathway	Skilled Pathway
English	4	4
Math	4	4
Science	4	3
Social Studies	4	4
PE	1	1
Health	1	1
Fine Arts	1	1
Electives	2	2
Foreign Language	2	0
Additional Credit (AP recommended)	1	0
CTE Concentration	0	4
Total	24	24

West Virginia's Summary of Differences Compared to Indiana

- * Both diploma options require more credits (when compared by semester) than any of Indiana's diploma options.
- * Students choose one of two pathways.
- * 4 years of mathematics is required in all diploma options.
- * 1 more year of Social Studies is required than in any of Indiana's options, two when looking at Indiana's General diploma.
- * Including all elective options (directed and other electives) there are more elective choices for students in Indiana than in West Virginia.

Colorado Diploma Structure

- * Competency based system determined at local level with a minimum requirement of receiving passing scores on English, Math, Science and Social Studies examinations.
- * There are a variety of exams that a student may pass to show that he/she has the required competencies to graduate.
- * The cut scores on the exams are set to match a variety of indicators including: higher education cut scores for placement in credit bearing classes, industry certificates, and military cut scores for academic consideration for preferred career training.

Colorado Diploma Content

Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness

In order to receive this designation there are four readiness indicators that must be met.

1. College ready in math and English language arts. (Must satisfy Higher Education's Admissions Requirements **and** demonstrate no need for remediation on college placement or comparable exams)
2. Complete Individual Career and Academic Plan. (Create, maintain, update ICAP that includes various topics: career and college interests, career plan and goals, work experience, academic progress, intentional course plan, extracurricular and service learning, college exploration and applications, progress in financial literacy)
3. Demonstrate 21st Century skills (Information Literacy, Invention, Collaboration, Critical Thinking, Self-Direction). This is based on High School Achievement in a variety of areas **and** engagement of at least 4 extracurricular activities.
4. Demonstrate mastery of academic content in 3 content areas. (Maintain 3.0 and meet performance indicators on various benchmarks in 3 content areas: ELA, Math, Social Science, Natural Science, Arts, Languages, CTE)

Colorado's Summary of Differences Compared to Indiana

- * Demonstrate competency through tests, not necessarily coursework.
- * Extracurricular activities are a requirement of CCR endorsement.
- * Integrated 21st Century skills into CCR endorsement.

Kentucky Structure and Content

- * Two diploma options: General and Pre-College Curriculum.
- * Credit Requirements:
 - * General has 22 credit requirement
 - * Pre-College has 24 credit requirement.

Content	General	Pre-College
English	4	4
Math	*3	*3
Social Studies	3	3
Science	3	3
Health	.5	.5
PE	.5	.5
Fine Arts	1	1
Language	0	2
Electives	7	7
Total	22	24

*Enrollment in math or QR course all 4 years is required

Kentucky's Summary of Differences Compared to Indiana

- * Kentucky's General option requires more credits (4 more when compared by semester) compared to Indiana's General and Core 40 options.
- * Kentucky's Pre-College option requires more credit than all of Indiana's options, including both Honor's options.
- * Kentucky's General option requires more math, science, and social studies than Indiana's General diploma.
- * Including all elective options (directed and other electives) there are more elective choices for students in Indiana than in Kentucky (with the exception of the Core 40).

Nevada Structure

- * Two diploma options: Standard and Advanced.
- * Credit Requirements:
 - * Standard has 22.5 credit requirement.
 - * Advanced has 24 credit requirement and minimum 3.25 GPA requirement.
 - * Advanced requires 1 additional course in each of the following subject areas: math, science, social studies.
- * Each requires students to achieve the same minimum cut scores on statewide assessments.

Nevada Content

Content	Standard	Advanced
English	4	4
Mathematics	3	4
Science	2	3
Social Studies	2 (Gov't and US History)	3
Art	1	1
Computers	.5	.5
PE	2	2
Health	.5	.5
Electives	7.5	6
Total	22.5	24

Nevada's Summary of Differences Compared to Indiana

- * Nevada's Standard option requires more credits (when compared by semester) than Indiana's General and Core 40 options.
- * Nevada's Advanced option requires more credit than all of Indiana's options, including both Honors options.
- * A computer class is required in Nevada.
- * Less social studies credits are required in Nevada's standard option than Indiana's Core 40 options.
- * More PE credit is required in Nevada than any of Indiana's options.
- * Including all elective options (directed and other electives) there are more elective choices for students in Indiana than in Nevada (with the exception of the Core 40).

Virginia Diploma Structure

- * Three diploma options: Standard, Advanced, and Modified Standard for students with disabilities.
- * Credit requirements:
 - * Standard 22 and students are also required to earn a CTE credential and complete one virtual course.
 - * Advanced 26 and students must also pass one virtual course.
 - * Modified Standard 20.
- * There are several “Seals of Achievement” that may be earned for the different diploma types.

Virginia Diploma Content

Content	Standard	Advanced	Modified
English	4	4	4
Math	3	4	3
Laboratory Science	3	4	2
History and Social Science	3	4	2
Health and PE	2	2	2
Fine Art or CTE	1	1	1
Foreign Language	2	3	0
Econ and Finance	1	1	0
Electives	4	3	6
Total	22	26	20

Virginia's Summary of Differences Compared to Indiana

- * Virginia's Standard diploma option requires more credit (when compared by semester) than either Indiana's General or Core 40 option.
- * Virginia's Advanced option requires more credit than all of Indiana's options, including both Honor's options.
- * Economics is a requirement in Virginia.
- * Foreign language is a requirement of the Standard diploma in Virginia.
- * Including all elective options (directed and other electives) there are more elective choices for students in Indiana than in Virginia.

Other States to Consider

- * There are several states that require 4 years of credit in mathematics. Three (Florida, Tennessee, and West Virginia) have been included here. The map shows all states that require 4 years of math credit, and includes Indiana and Kentucky since they do require that a math or QR course be taken all 4 years.

States with 4 Year Mathematics Requirement



- * *Indiana and Kentucky only require 3 credits, but a course in the 4th year.
- **Graduation requirements are set at the local level.

Links to diploma requirements

- * Indiana: <http://www.doe.in.gov/achievement/curriculum/indianas-diploma-requirements>
- * Colorado: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/adoptedgraduationguidelines2013.pdf>
- * Florida: <http://www.fl DOE.org/bii/studentpro/grad-require.asp>
- * Kentucky: <http://education.ky.gov/curriculum/pages/gradrequirements.aspx>
- * Maryland: http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/testing/hsg_qa/
- * Minnesota: <http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/StuSuc/GradReq/>
- * Nevada: http://www.doe.nv.gov/APAC_Graduation_Requirements/
- * Tennessee: <http://www.tn.gov/education/instruction/graduation.shtml>
- * Virginia: <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/graduation/>
- * West Virginia: <http://wvde.state.wv.us/counselors/students/documents/WVHSGraduationRequires2011-12andbeyond.pdf>